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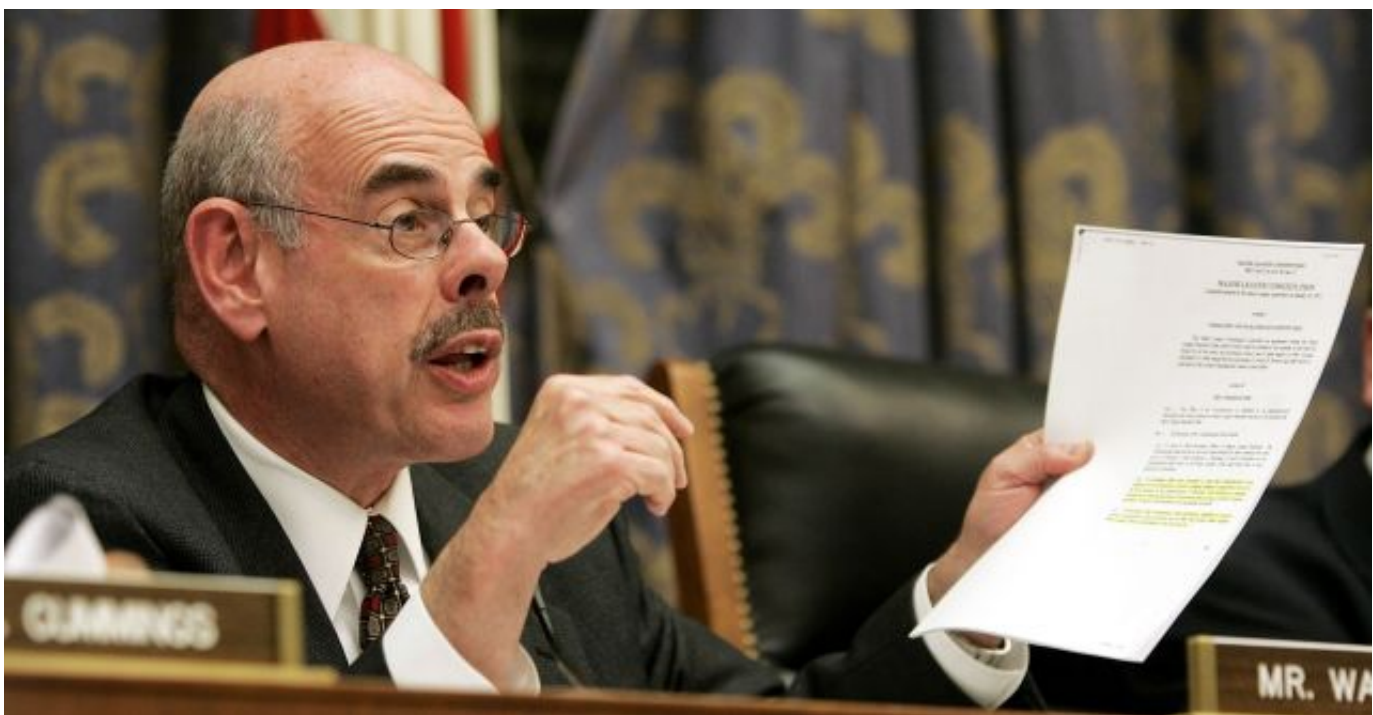


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Fierce Liberal Rep. Henry Waxman To Retire After 40 Years In Congress



Rep. Henry Waxman. (Photo by [Mark Wilson/Getty Images](#))

Rep. Henry Waxman, the Westside congressman who is considered one of the lions of the Democratic Party, announced today that he was retiring at the end of the year after 40 years in congress.

Waxman, 74, currently represents California's 33rd Congressional District, which includes Beverly Hills, Bel Air, Manhattan Beach and Santa Monica. Waxman said [in a statement on his website](#) that the decision to retire from Congress came from a desire to have a life outside of Washington and to explore other avenues of public service.

"After 40 years in Congress, it's time for someone else to have the chance to make his or her mark, ideally someone who is young enough to make the long-term commitment that's required for real legislative success." Waxman said.

Waxman also railed against "the extremism of the Tea Party" and a Congress that "operates in a partisan intellectual vacuum, denying science, refusing to listen to experts, and ignoring facts." Despite this, Waxman said that he is not leaving Congress frustrated.

Waxman began his political career in 1969 when he was elected to the California Assembly at the age of 29. From there, he entered Congress in 1974 under the Gerald Ford Administration and never left, quickly becoming one of the most influential liberal members on Capitol Hill.

Waxman was a key authors [of the Affordable Care Act](#). In his career, he lobbied for [safer infant formula and healthcare for AIDS patients](#). He also had a large part in crafting anti-smoking legislation in the 90s and was chairman of the [House Energy and Commerce Committee](#) in 2009 and 2010. He introduced legislation to [reduce helicopter noise in L.A.](#) and [rigorously pursued steroid use in baseball](#).

But Waxman is also known for [putting the brakes on a subway line](#) in the 80s that would have run under Wilshire Boulevard and significantly reduced traffic in the area. Waxman lifted his ban in 2007, but the damage had been done.

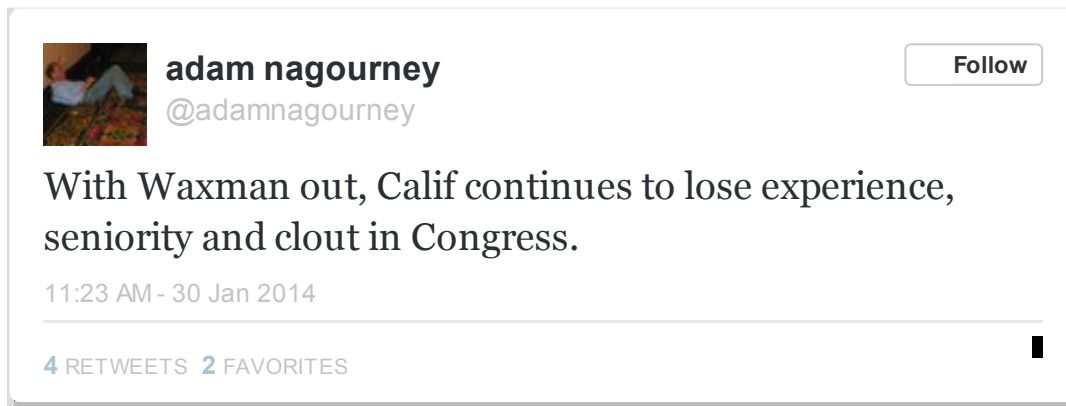
Rep. Adam Schiff, who represents the Valley and some parts of the Eastside, offered this statement on Waxman's retirement:

"Henry Waxman will go down as one of the giants of Congress - smart, strategically savvy, dogged at oversight and a power to be reckoned with - his hand can be seen in almost every domestic achievement of the last few decades...I wish Henry every success in the future and while I am glad that he will be free to pursue his other ambitions, he will leave behind an unfillable void in the House."

Now that Waxman is not seeking reelection, the race for control of his district is expected to heat up. The district is solidly Democratic, and a flood of potential Democratic candidates will crowd the ballot in time for the June primary. Even Independent candidates [such as Marianne Williamson](#) and [Brent Roske](#), who are still considered outsiders, could benefit from Waxman's retirement. Williamson weighed in on Waxman's retirement on Twitter this morning:

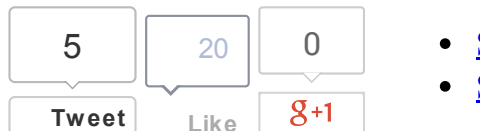


Whoever the front-runner may be, the newbie that will take Waxman's place will be at the bottom of the political pecking order. Adam Nagourney of the New York Times offered this perspective on Waxman's exit:



Contact the [author](#) of this article or email tips@laist.com with further questions, comments or tips.

[Matthew Bramlett](#) in [News](#) on Jan 30, 2014 11:13 am



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